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## Introduction

What is "classical liberalism?" Is it a specific set of beliefs, a philosophy, an economic theory, or something else? In this series, Dr. Nigel Ashford of the Institute for Humane Studies explores what classical liberalism -- sometimes referred to as "libertarianism" -- actually means. Dr. Ashford looks at 5 different schools of classical liberalism, and examines their similarities and differences.

<https://www.youtube.com/embed/mc7ucjtzdHg>

"Schools of Thought in Classical Liberalism, Part 1: Introduction" by the  
Institute for Humane Studies

## Description

What is "classical liberalism?" Is it a specific set of beliefs, a philosophy, an economic theory, or something else? In this series, Dr. Nigel Ashford of the Institute for Humane Studies explores what classical liberalism -- sometimes referred to as "libertarianism" -- actually means. Dr. Ashford looks at 5 different schools of classical liberalism, and examines their similarities and differences.

## Watch on YouTube

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mc7ucjtzdHg>

## Discussion Questions

### Exercise:

#### Problem:

Which is not one of the schools of thought Nigel will talk about?

- A. The Austrian School
- B. Anarcho-Capitalism
- C. The Chicago School
- D. Public Choice

E. Natural Rights  
F. The Scottish School

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**Solution:**

F. The Scottish School

## Milton Friedman and the Chicago School

How should we assess the merits of a law or government program? Many laws are well-intended, but do they actually have good outcomes?

According to Milton Friedman and the members of the "Chicago School," we need to look at empirical evidence and see the consequences of laws. Dr. Nigel Ashford of the Institute for Humane Studies takes a close look at the Chicago School.

[https://www.youtube.com/embed/0gcx8\\_tnkDs](https://www.youtube.com/embed/0gcx8_tnkDs)

"Schools of Thought in Classical Liberalism, Part 2: Milton Friedman and the Chicago School" by the Institute for Humane Studies

### Description

How should we assess the merits of a law or government program? Many laws are well-intended, but do they actually have good outcomes?

According to Milton Friedman and the members of the "Chicago School," we need to look at empirical evidence and see the consequences of laws. Dr. Nigel Ashford of the Institute for Humane Studies takes a close look at the Chicago School.

### Discussion Questions

#### Exercise:

##### Problem:

According to members of the Chicago School, why is there such a gap between positive intentions and consequences of policies?

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##### Solution:

Policy makers fail to take into account self-interest in people, their negative human nature

**Exercise:****Problem:**

Which of the following is not a proper role of government according to the Chicago School of classical liberalism?

- a. Protection through both military and the police.
- b. The administration of justice.
- c. Protection from negative externalities.
- d. Protection of a minimum wage.

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**Solution:**

- d. Protection of a minimum wage.

## Public Choice

Government grows and grows. Why? Is there any way to limit government?

In this video, Dr. Nigel Ashford of the Institute for Humane Studies explores the intellectual school known as "public choice" which uses economic tools to study politics.

<https://www.youtube.com/embed/ffJFNEujeL4>

"Schools of Thought in Classical Liberalism, Part 3: Public Choice" by the  
Institute for Humane Studies

## Description

Government grows and grows. Why? Is there any way to limit government?

In this video, Dr. Nigel Ashford of the Institute for Humane Studies explores the intellectual school known as "public choice" which uses economic tools to study politics.

## Discussion Questions

As Prof. Ashford says, public choice theorists are most concerned with how to limit the role of government. Why does the government grow? When we already have a constitution with enumerated rights, why do we have this problem in the first place?

### Exercise:

#### Problem:

How does the Public Choice school determine the role of government?

- a. They look for a social contract.
- b. They look at empirical results and how those results relate to hypotheses.
- c. They look at causes of violence through coercion.
- d. They look for the best way to increase social utility.

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**Solution:**

- a. They look for a social contract.

## The Austrian School

In this video, Dr. Nigel Ashford of the Institute for Humane Studies provides an introduction to the Austrian School of Economics and the works of Friedrich Hayek and Ludwig von Mises.

<https://www.youtube.com/embed/4hIax9gh7fU>

"Schools of Thought in Classical  
Liberalism, Part 4: The Austrian School"  
by the Institute for Humane Studies

### Description

In this video, Dr. Nigel Ashford of the Institute for Humane Studies provides an introduction to the Austrian School of Economics and the works of Friedrich Hayek and Ludwig von Mises.

### Discussion Questions

Hayek and Mises both agreed on many questions, such as the necessity of a limited government, but this played out differently in their theories. Why did each thinker want a limited government? How did they propose to limit this government?

#### Exercise:

**Problem:** According to the Misesian axiom,

- a. Some things are empirically more valuable than others.
- b. Value can never come from an individual.
- c. Value is subjective.
- d. Value is objective.

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#### Solution:

- c. Value is subjective.



## Natural Rights

Do all people have human rights, or natural rights? Dr. Nigel Ashford of the Institute for Humane Studies examines the ""natural rights"" school of thought, in particular the theories of philosophers Ayn Rand and Robert Nozick.

<https://www.youtube.com/embed/Ysis1GfV0Qc>

### Description

Do people have human rights, or natural rights? Dr. Nigel Ashford of the Institute for Humane Studies examines the ""natural rights"" school of thought, in particular the theories of philosophers Ayn Rand and Robert Nozick.

### Discussion Questions

What do Rand and Nozick mean by “natural rights”? From where do they arise? How do they want government to protect these rights?

#### Exercise:

##### Problem:

The belief that natural rights exist because of human nature is

- a. instinctive.
- b. theological.
- c. deontological.
- d. marxist.

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##### Solution:

- c. deontological.

## Anarcho-Capitalism

Do we even need a government? Some anarchist philosophers and economists don't think so. Dr. Nigel Ashford of the Institute for Humane Studies takes a look at anarcho-capitalism, with two a particular focus on the work of Murray Rothbard and David Friedman.

<https://www.youtube.com/embed/1r99Ae6gmgg>

"Schools of Thought in Classical  
Liberalism, Part 6: Anarcho-Capitalism"  
by the Institute for Humane Studies

### Description

Do we even need a government? Some anarchist philosophers and economists don't think so. Dr. Nigel Ashford of the Institute for Humane Studies takes a look at anarcho-capitalism, with two a particular focus on the work of Murray Rothbard and David Friedman.

### Discussion Questions

Do Rothbard and David Friedman think there is ever a good use of government? If not, what would take government's place?

#### Exercise:

**Problem:** Unlike his father, David Friedman believes that

- a. markets are always more efficient than government.
- b. markets and government always share goals.
- c. markets and government are always equally efficient.
- d. there are rare occasions when government is more efficient than the market.

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#### Solution:

- a. markets are always more efficient than government.



## What's Your View?

What do you think the role of government should be? Are you in favor of anarchy or do you believe there is a role for the state? Should government be limited to protecting natural rights, or should it provide other services as well? Dr. Nigel Ashford encourages you to think deeply about your own beliefs and political philosophy, and draw your own conclusions.

<https://www.youtube.com/embed/nVTryhCeddQ>

"Schools of Thought in Classical  
Liberalism, Part 7: Conclusion: What's  
Your View?" by the Institute for Humane  
Studies

## Description

What do you think the role of government should be? Are you in favor of anarchy or do you believe there is a role for the state? Should government be limited to protecting natural rights, or should it provide other services as well? Dr. Nigel Ashford encourages you to think deeply about your own beliefs and political philosophy, and draw your own conclusions.

## Watch on YouTube

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nVTryhCeddQ>

## Discussion Questions

What are your thoughts? Respond to Dr. Nigel Ashford's questions.